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PATENT

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on page 15, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

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--REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION APPLICATIONS

This application ~~claims priority from~~ is a continuation application based on U.S. Serial No. 09/775,851, now U.S. Patent No. 6,610,860, filed February 2, 2001, which claims benefit of U.S. provisional application Serial No. 60/179,794, filed [[on]] February 2, 2000. --

Please replace the paragraph on page 3, lines 8-15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In one embodiment, R_2 is an ester ($R_{2a}C(O)O-$), a carbamate ($R_{2a}R_{2b}NC(O)O-$), a carbonate ($R_{2a}OC(O)O-$), or a **[thiocarbamate] thiocarbonate** ($R_{2a}SC(O)O-$) wherein R_{2a} and R_{2b} are independently hydrogen, hydrocarbyl, substituted hydrocarbyl or heterocyclo. In a preferred embodiment, R_2 is an ester ($R_{2a}C(O)O-$), wherein R_{2a} is aryl or heteroaromatic. In another preferred embodiment, R_2 is an ester ($R_{2a}C(O)O-$), wherein R_{2a} is substituted or unsubstituted phenyl, furyl, thienyl, or pyridyl. In one particularly preferred embodiment, R_2 is benzoyloxy.--

Please replace the paragraph on page 3, line 34 through page 4, line 19, with the following the rewritten paragraph:

--While R_9 is keto in one embodiment of the present invention, in other embodiments R_9 may have the alpha or beta stereochemical configuration, preferably the beta stereochemical configuration, and may be, for example, α - or β -hydroxy or α - or β -acyloxy. For example, when R_9 is acyloxy, it may be an ester ($R_{9a}C(O)O-$), a carbamate ($R_{9a}R_{9b}NC(O)O-$), a carbonate ($R_{9a}OC(O)O-$), or a **[thiocarbamate] thiocarbonate** ($R_{9a}SC(O)O-$) wherein R_{9a} and R_{9b} are independently hydrogen, hydrocarbyl, substituted hydrocarbyl or heterocyclo. If R_9 is an ester ($R_{9a}C(O)O-$), R_{9a} is